Anna Christie - Act II

di Eugene O'Neill (1921)

ACT II

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Scene: Ten days later. The stern of the deeply-laden barge, "SIMEON WINTHROP," at anchor in the outer harbor of Provincetown, Mass. It is ten o'clock at night. Dense fog shrouds the barge on all sides, and she floats motionless on a calm. A lantern set up on an immense coil of thick hawser sheds a dull, filtering light on objects near it--the heavy steel bits for making fast the tow lines, etc. In the rear is the cabin, its misty windows glowing wanly with the light of a lamp inside. The chimney of the cabin stove rises a few feet above the roof. The doleful tolling of bells, on Long Point, on ships at anchor, breaks the silence at regular intervals.

As the curtain rises, ANNA is discovered standing near the coil of rope on which the lantern is placed. She looks healthy, transformed, the natural color has come back to her face. She has on a black, oilskin coat, but wears no hat. She is staring out into the fog astern with an expression of awed wonder. The cabin door is pushed open and CHRIS appears. He is dressed in yellow oilskins--coat, pants, sou'wester--and wears high sea-boots.

CHRIS: *The glare from the cabin still in his eyes, peers blinkmgly astern.* Anna! *Receiving no reply, he calls again, this time with apparent apprehension.* Anna!

ANNA: *With a start--making a gesture with her hand as if to impose silence--in a hushed whisper.* Yes, here I am. What d'you want?

CHRIS: *Walks over to her--solicitously.* Don't you come turn in, Anna? It's late--after four bells. It ain't good for you stay out here in fog, Ay tank.

ANNA: Why not? *With a trace of strange exultation.* I love this fog! Honest! It's so--[She hesitates, groping for a word.]--Funny and still. I feel as if I was--out of things altogether.

CHRIS: *Spitting disgustedly.* Fog's vorst one of her dirty tricks, py yingo!

ANNA: *With a short laugh.* Beefing about the sea again? I'm getting so's I love it, the little I've seen.

CHRIS: *Glancing at her moodily.* Dat's foolish talk, Anna. You see her more, you don't talk dat vay. *Then seeing her irritation, he hastily adopts a more cheerful tone.* But Ay'm glad you like it on barge. Ay'm glad it makes you feel good again. *With a placating grin.* You like live like dis alone with ole fa'der, eh?

ANNA: Sure I do. Everything's been so different from anything I ever come across before. And now--this fog--Gee, I wouldn't have missed it for nothing. I never thought living on ships was so different from land. Gee, I'd just love to work on it, honest I would, if I was a man. I don't wonder you always been a sailor,

CHRIS: *Vehemently.* Ay ain't sailor, Anna. And dis ain't real sea. You only see nice part. *Then as she doesn't answer, he continues hopefully.* Vell, fog lift in morning, Ay tank.

ANNA: *The exultation again in her voice.* I love it! I don't give a rap if it never lifts! *CHRIS fidgets from one foot to the other worriedly. ANNA continues slowly, after a pause.* It makes me feel clean--out here--'s if I'd taken a bath.

CHRIS: *After a pause.* You better go in cabin--read book. Dat put you to sleep.

ANNA: I don't want to sleep. I want to stay out here--and think about things.

CHRIS: *Walks away from her toward the cabin--then comes back.* You act funny to-night, Anna.

ANNA: *Her voice rising angrily.* Say, what're you trying to do-- make things rotten? You been kind as kind can be to me and I certainly appreciate it--only don't spoil it all now. *Then, seeing the hurt expression on her father's face, she forces a smile.* Let's talk of something else. Come. Sit down here. *She points to the coil of rope.*

CHRIS: *Sits down beside her with a sigh.* It's gatting pooty late in night, Anna. Must be near five bells.

ANNA: *Interestedly.* Five bells? What time is that?

CHRIS: Half past ten.

ANNA: Funny I don't know nothing about sea talk--but those cousins was always talking crops and that stuff. Gee, wasn't I sick of it-- and of them!

CHRIS: You don't like live on farm, Anna?

ANNA: I've told you a hundred times I hated it. *Decidedly.* I'd rather have one drop of ocean than all the farms in the world! Honest! And you wouldn't like a farm, neither. Here's where you belong. *She makes a sweeping gesture seaward.* But not on a coal barge. You belong on a real ship, sailing all over the world.

CHRIS: *Moodily.* Ay've done dat many year, Anna, when Ay vas damn fool.

ANNA: *Disgustedly.* Oh, rats! *After a pause she speaks musingly.* Was the men in our family always sailors--as far back as you know about?

CHRIS: *Shortly.* Yes. Damn fools! All men in our village on coast, Sveden, go to sea. Ain't nutting else for dem to do. My fa'der die on board ship in Indian Ocean. He's buried at sea. Ay don't never know him only little bit. Den my tree bro'der, older'n me, dey go on ships. Den Ay go, too. Den my mo'der she's left all 'lone. She die pooty quick after dat--all 'lone. Ve vas all avay on voyage when she die. *He pauses sadly.* Two my bro'der dey gat lost on fishing boat same like your bro'ders vas drowned. My oder bro'der, he save money, give up sea, den he die home in bed. He's only one dat ole davil don't kill. *Defiantly.* But me, Ay bet you Ay die ashore in bed, too!

ANNA: Were all of 'em yust plain sailors?

CHRIS: Able body seaman, most of dem. *With a certain pride.* Dey vas all smart seaman, too--A one. *Then after hesitating a moment-- shyly.* Ay vas bo'sun.

ANNA: Bo'sun?

CHRIS: Dat's kind of officer.

ANNA: Gee, that was fine. What does he do?

CHRIS: *After a second's hesitation, plunged into gloom again by his fear of her enthusiasm.* Hard vork all time. It's rotten, Ay tal you, for go to sea. *Determined to disgust her with sea life-- volubly.* Dey're all fool fallar, dem fallar in our family. Dey all vork rotten yob on sea for nutting, don't care nutting but yust gat big pay day in pocket, gat drunk, gat robbed, ship avay again on oder voyage. Dey don't come home, Dey don't do anytang like good man do. And dat ole davil, sea, sooner, later she svallow dem up.

ANNA: *With an excited laugh.* Good sports, I'd call 'em. *Then hastily.* But say--listen--did all the women of the family marry sailors?

CHRIS: *Eagerly--seeing a chance to drive home his point.* Yes-- and it's bad on dem like hell vorst of all. Dey don't see deir men only once in long while. Dey set and vait all 'lone. And vhen deir boys grows up, go to sea, dey sit and vait some more. *Vehemently.* Any gel marry sailor, she's crazy fool! Your mo'der she tal you same tang if she vas alive. *He relapses into an attitude of somber*

brooding.

ANNA: *After a pause--dreamily.* Funny! I do feel sort of--nutty, to-night. I feel old.

CHRIS: *Mystified.* Old?

ANNA: Sure--like I'd been living a long, long time--out here in the fog. *Frowning perplexedly.* I don't know how to tell you yust what I mean. It's like I'd come home after a long visit away some place. It all seems like I'd been here before lots of times--on boats--in this same fog. *With a short laugh.* You must think I'm off my base.

CHRIS: *Gruffly.* Anybody feel funny dat vay in fog.

ANNA: *Persistently.* But why d'you s'pose I feel so--so--like I'd found something I'd missed and been looking for--'s if this was the right place for me to fit in? And I seem to have forgot-- everything that's happened--like it didn't matter no more. And I feel clean, somehow--like you feel yust after you've took a bath. And I feel happy for once--yes, honest!--happier than I ever been anywhere before! *As CHRIS makes no comment but a heavy sigh, she continues wonderingly.* It's nutty for me to feel that way, don't you think?

CHRIS: *A grim foreboding in his voice.* Ay tank Ay'm damn fool for bring you on voyage, Anna.

ANNA: *Impressed by his tone.* You talk--nutty to-night yourself. You act's if you was scared something was going to happen.

CHRIS: Only God know dat, Anna.

ANNA: *Half-mockingly.* Then it'll be Gawd's will, like the preachers say-what does happen.

CHRIS: *Starts to his feet with fierce protest.* No! Dat ole davil, sea, she ain't God! *In the pause of silence that comes after his defiance a hail in a man's husky, exhausted voice comes faintly out of the fog to port.* "Ahoy!" *CHRIS gives a startled exclamation.*

ANNA: *Jumping to her feet.* What's that?

CHRIS: *Who has regained his composure--sheepishly.* Py golly, dat scare me for minute. It's only some fallar hail, Anna--loose his course in fog. Must be fisherman's power boat. His engine break down, Ay guess. *The "ahoy" comes again through the wall of fog, sounding much nearer this time. CHRIS goes over to the port bulwark.* Sound from dis side. She come in from open sea. *He holds his hands to his mouth, megaphone-fashion, and shouts back.* Ahoy, dere! Vhat's trouble?

THE VOICE: *This time sounding nearer but up forward toward the bow.* Heave a rope when we come alongside. *Then irritably.* Where are ye, ye scut?

CHRIS: Ay hear dem rowing. Dey come up by bow, Ay tank. *Then shouting out again.* Dis vay!

THE VOICE: Right ye are! *There is a muffled sound of oars in oar- locks.*

ANNA: *Half to herself--resentfully.* Why don't that guy stay where he belongs?

CHRIS: *Hurriedly.* Ay go up bow. All hands asleep 'cepting fallar on vatch. Ay gat heave line to dat fallar. *He picks up a coil of rope and hurries off toward the bow. ANNA walks back toward the extreme stern as if she wanted to remain as much isolated possible. She turns her back on the proceedings and stares out into the fog. THE VOICE is heard again shouting "Ahoy" and CHRIS answering "Dis way" Then there is a pause--the murmur of excited voices--then the scuffling of feet. CHRIS appears from around the cabin to port. He is supporting the limp form of a man dressed in dungarees, holding one of the man's arms around his neck. The deckhand, JOHNSON, a young, blond Swede, follows him, helping along another exhausted man similar fashion. ANNA turns to look at them. Chris stops for a second--volubly.* Anna! You come help, vill you? You find vhiskey in cabin. Dese fallars need drink for fix dem. Dey vas near dead.

ANNA: *Hurrying to him.* Sure--but who are they? What's the trouble?

CHRIS: Sailor fallars. Deir steamer gat wrecked. Dey been five days in open boat--four fallars--only one left able stand up. Come, Anna. *She precedes him into the cabin, holding the door open while he and JOHNSON carry in their burdens. The door is shut, then opened again as JOHNSON comes out. CHRIS'S voice shouts after him.* Go gat oder fallar, Yohnson.

JOHNSON: Yes, sir. *He goes. The door is closed again. MAT BURKE stumbles in around the port side of the cabin. He moves slowly, feeling his way uncertainly, keeping hold of the port bulwark with his right hand to steady himself. He is stripped to the waist, has on nothing but a pair of dirty dungaree pants. He is a powerful, broad-chested six-footer, his face handsome in a hard, rough, bold, defiant way. He is about thirty, in the full power of his heavy-muscled, immense strength. His dark eyes are bloodshot and wild from sleeplessness. The muscles of his arms and shoulders are lumped in knots and bunches, the veins of his forearms stand out like blue cords. He finds his way to the coil of hawser and sits down on it facing the cabin, his back bowed, head in his hands, in an attitude of spent weariness.*

BURKE: *Talking aloud to himself.* Row, ye divil! Row! *Then lifting his head and looking about him.* What's this tub? Well, we're safe anyway--with the help of God. *He makes the sign of the cross mechanically. JOHNSON comes along the deck to port, supporting the fourth man, who is babbling to himself incoherently. BURKE glances at him disdainfully.* Is it losing the small wits ye iver had, ye are? Deck-scrubbing scut! *They pass him and go into the cabin, leaving the door open. BURKE sags forward wearily.* I'm bate out--bate out entirely.

ANNA: *Comes out of the cabin with a tumbler quarter-full of whiskey in her hand. She gives a start when she sees BURKE so near her, the light from the open door falling full on him. Then, overcoming what is evidently a feeling of repulsion, she comes up beside him.* Here you are. Here's a drink for you. You need it, I guess.

BURKE: *Lifting his head slowly--confusedly.* Is it dreaming I am?

ANNA: *Half smiling.* Drink it and you'll find it ain't no dream.

BURKE: To hell with the drink--but I'll take it just the same. *He tosses it down.* Aah! I'm needin' that--and 'tis fine stuff. *Looking up at her with frank, grinning admiration.* But 'twasn't the booze I meant when I said, was I dreaming. I thought you was some mermaid out of the sea come to torment me. *He reaches out to feel of her arm.* Aye, rale flesh and blood, divil a less.

ANNA: *Coldly. Stepping back from him.* Cut that.

BURKE: But tell me, isn't this a barge I'm on--or isn't it?

ANNA: Sure.

BURKE: And what is a fine handsome woman the like of you doing on this scow?

ANNA: *Coldly.* Never you mind. *Then half-amused in spite of herself.* Say, you're a great one, honest--starting right in kidding after what you been through.

BURKE: *Delighted--proudly.* Ah, it was nothing--aisy for a rale man with guts to him, the like of me. *He laughs.* All in the day's work, darlin'. *Then, more seriously but still in a boastful tone, confidentially.* But I won't be denying 'twas a damn narrow squeak. We'd all ought to be with Davy Jones at the bottom of the sea, be rights. And only for me, I'm telling you, and the great strength and guts is in me, we'd be being scoffed by the fishes this minute!

ANNA: *Contemptuously.* Gee, you hate yourself, don't you? *Then turning away from him indifferently.* Well, you'd better come in and lie down. You must want to sleep.

BURKE: *Stung--rising unsteadily to his feet with chest out and head thrown back--resentfully.* Lie down

and sleep, is it? Divil a wink I'm after having for two days and nights and divil a bit I'm needing now. Let you not be thinking I'm the like of them three weak scuts come in the boat with me. I could lick the three of them sitting down with one hand tied behind me. They may be bate out, but I'm not--and I've been rowing the boat with them lying in the bottom not able to raise a hand for the last two days we was in it. *Furiously, as he sees this is making no impression on her.* And I can lick all hands on this tub, wan be wan, tired as I am!

ANNA: *Sarcastically.* Gee, ain't you a hard guy! *Then, with a trace of sympathy, as she notices him swaying from weakness.* But never mind that fight talk. I'll take your word for all you've said. Go on and sit down out here, anyway, if I can't get you to come inside. *He sits down weakly.* You're all in, you might as well own up to it.

BURKE: *Fiercely.* The hell I am!

ANNA: *Coldly.* Well, be stubborn then for all I care. And I must say I don't care for your language. The men I know don't pull that rough stuff when ladies are around.

BURKE: *Getting unsteadily to his feet again--in a rage.* Ladies! Ho-ho! Divil mend you! Let you not be making game of me. What would ladies be doing on this bloody hulk? *As ANNA attempts to go to the cabin, he lurches into her path.* Aisy, now! You're not the old Square-head's woman, I suppose you'll be telling me next-- living in his cabin with him, no less! *Seeing the cold, hostile expression on ANNA's face, he suddenly changes his tone to one of boisterous joviality.* But I do be thinking, iver since the first look my eyes took at you, that it's a fool you are to be wasting yourself--a fine, handsome girl--on a stumpy runt of a man like that old Swede. There's too many strapping great lads on the sea would give their heart's blood for one kiss of you!

ANNA: *Scornfully.* Lads like you, eh?

BURKE: *Grinning.* Ye take the words out o' my mouth. I'm the proper lad for you, if it's meself do be saying it. *With a quick movement he puts his arms about her waist.* Whisht, now, me daisy! Himself's in the cabin. It's wan of your kisses I'm needing to take the tiredness from me bones. Wan kiss, now! *He presses her to him and attempts to kiss her.*

ANNA: *Struggling fiercely.* Leggo of me, you big mut! *She pushes him away with all her might. BURKE, weak and tottering, is caught off his guard. He is thrown down backward and, in falling, hits his head a hard thump against the bulwark. He lies there still, knocked out for the moment. ANNA stands for a second, looking down at him frightenedly. Then she kneels down beside him and raises his head to her knee, staring into his face anxiously for some sign of life.*

BURKE: *Stirring a bit--mutteringly.* God stiffen it! *He opens his eyes and blinks up at her with vague wonder.*

ANNA: *Letting his head sink back on the deck, rising to her feet with a sigh of relief.* You're coming to all right, eh? Gee, I was scared for a moment I'd killed you.

BURKE: *With difficulty rising to a sitting position-- scornfully.* Killed, is it? It'd take more than a bit of a blow to crack my thick skull. *Then looking at her with the most intense admiration.* But, glory be, it's a power of strength is in them two fine arms of yours. There's not a man in the world can say the same as you, that he seen Mat Burke lying at his feet and him dead to the world.

ANNA: *Rather remorsefully.* Forget it. I'm sorry it happened, see? *BURKE rises and sits on bench. Then severely.* Only you had no right to be getting fresh with me. Listen, now, and don't go getting any more wrong notions. I'm on this barge because I'm making a trip with my father. The captain's my father. Now you know.

BURKE: The old square--the old Swede, I mean?

ANNA: Yes.

BURKE: *Rising--peering at her face.* Sure I might have known it, if I wasn't a bloody fool from birth. Where else'd you get that fine yellow hair is like a golden crown on your head.

ANNA: *With an amused laugh.* Say, nothing stops you, does it? *Then attempting a severe tone again.* But don't you think you ought to be apologizing for what you said and done yust a minute ago, instead of trying to kid me with that mush?

BURKE: *Indignantly.* Mush! *Then bending forward toward her with very intense earnestness.* Indade and I will ask your pardon a thousand times--and on my knees, if ye like. I didn't mean a word of what I said or did. *Resentful again for a second.* But divil a woman in all the ports of the world has iver made a great fool of me that way before!

ANNA: *With amused sarcasm.* I see. You mean you're a lady-killer and they all fall for you.

BURKE: *Offended. Passionately.* Leave off your fooling! 'Tis that is after getting my back up at you. *Earnestly.* 'Tis no lie I'm telling you about the women. *Ruefully.* Though it's a great jackass I am to be mistaking you, even in anger, for the like of them cows on the waterfront is the only women I've met up with since I was growed to a man. *As ANNA shrinks away from him at this, he hurries on pleadingly.* I'm a hard, rough man and I'm not fit, I'm thinking, to be kissing the shoe-soles of a fine, dacent girl the like of yourself. 'Tis only the ignorance of your kind made me see you wrong. So you'll forgive me, for the love of God, and let us be friends from this out. *Passionately.* I'm thinking I'd rather be friends with you than have my wish for anything else in the world. *He holds out his hand to her shyly.*

ANNA: *Looking queerly at him, perplexed and worried, but moved and pleased in spite of herself--takes his hand uncertainly.* Sure.

BURKE: *With boyish delight.* God bless you! *In his excitement he squeezes her hand tight.*

ANNA: Ouch!

BURKE: *Hastily dropping her hand--ruefully.* Your pardon, Miss. 'Tis a clumsy ape I am. *Then simply--glancing down his arm proudly.* It's great power I have in my hand and arm, and I do be forgetting it at times.

ANNA: *Nursing her crushed hand and glancing at his arm, not without a trace of his own admiration.* Gee, you're some strong, all right.

BURKE: *Delighted.* It's no lie, and why shouldn't I be, with me shoveling a million tons of coal in the stokeholes of ships since I was a lad only. *He pats the coil of hawser invitingly.* Let you sit down, now, Miss, and I'll be telling you a bit of myself, and you'll be telling me a bit of yourself, and in an hour we'll be as old friends as if we was born in the same house. *He pulls at her sleeve shyly.* Sit down now, if you plaze.

ANNA: *With a half laugh.* Well--[She sits down.] But we won't talk about me, see? You tell me about yourself and about the wreck.

BURKE: *Flattered.* I'll tell you, surely. But can I be asking you one question. Miss, has my head in a puzzle?

ANNA: *Guardedly.* Well--I dunno--what is it?

BURKE: What is it you do when you're not taking a trip with the Old Man? For I'm thinking a fine girl the like of you ain't living always on this tub.

ANNA: *Uneasily.* No--of course I ain't. *She searches his face suspiciously, afraid there may be some hidden insinuation in his words. Seeing his simple frankness, she goes on confidently.* Well, I'll tell you. I'm a governess, see? I take care of kids for people and learn them things.

BURKE: *Impressed.* A governess, is it? You must be smart, surely.

ANNA: But let's not talk about me. Tell me about the wreck, like you promised me you would.

BURKE: *Importantly.* 'Twas this way, Miss. Two weeks out we ran into the divil's own storm, and she sprang wan hell of a leak up for'ard. The skipper was hoping to make Boston before another blow would finish her, but ten days back we met up with another storm the like of the first, only worse. Four days we was in it with green seas raking over her from bow to stern. That was a terrible time, God help us. *Proudly.* And if 'twasn't for me and my great strength, I'm telling you--and it's God's truth--there'd been mutiny itself in the stokehole. 'Twas me held them to it, with a kick to wan and a clout to another, and they not caring a damn for the engineers any more, but fearing a clout of my right arm more than they'd fear the sea itself. *He glances at her anxiously, eager for her approval.*

ANNA: *Concealing a smile--amused by this boyish boasting of his.* You did some hard work, didn't you?

BURKE: *Promptly.* I did that! I'm a divil for sticking it out when them that's weak give up. But much good it did anyone! 'Twas a mad, fightin' scramble in the last seconds with each man for himself. I disremember how it come about, but there was the four of us in wan boat and when we was raised high on a great wave I took a look about and divil a sight there was of ship or men on top of the sea.

ANNA: *In a subdued voice.* Then all the others was drowned?

BURKE: They was, surely.

ANNA: *With a shudder.* What a terrible end!

BURKE: *Turns to her.* A terrible end for the like of them swabs does live on land, maybe. But for the like of us does be roaming the seas, a good end, I'm telling you--quick and clane.

ANNA: *Struck by the word.* Yes, clean. That's yust the word for-- all of it--the way it makes me feel.

BURKE: The sea, you mean? *Interestedly.* I'm thinking you have a bit of it in your blood, too. Your Old Man wasn't only a barge rat--begging your pardon--all his life, by the cut of him.

ANNA: No, he was bo'sun on sailing ships for years. And all the men on both sides of the family have gone to sea as far back as he remembers, he says. All the women have married sailors, too.

BURKE: *With intense satisfaction.* Did they, now? They had spirit in them. It's only on the sea you'd find rale men with guts is fit to wed with fine, high-tempered girls *Then he adds half-boldly* the like of yourself.

ANNA: *With a laugh.* There you go kiddin' again. *Then seeing his hurt expression--quickly.* But you was going to tell me about yourself. You're Irish, of course I can tell that.

BURKE: *Stoutly.* Yes, thank God, though I've not seen a sight of it in fifteen years or more.

ANNA: *Thoughtfully.* Sailors never do go home hardly, do they? That's what my father was saying.

BURKE: He wasn't telling no lie. *With sudden melancholy.* It's a hard and lonesome life, the sea is. The only women you'd meet in the ports of the world who'd be willing to speak you a kind word isn't woman at all. You know the kind I mane, and they're a poor, wicked lot, God forgive them. They're looking to steal the money from you only.

ANNA: *Her face averted--rising to her feet--agitatedly.* I think--I guess I'd better see what's doing inside.

BURKE: *Afraid he has offended her--beseechingly.* Don't go, I'm saying! Is it I've given you offence with my talk of the like of them? Don't heed it at all! I'm clumsy in my wits when it comes to talking proper with a girl the like of you. And why wouldn't I be? Since the day I left home for to go to sea punching coal, this is the first time I've had a word with a rale, dacent woman. So don't turn your

back on me now, and we beginning to be friends.

ANNA: *Turning to him again--forcing a smile.* I'm not sore at you, honest.

BURKE: *Gratefully.* God bless you!

ANNA: *Changing the subject abruptly.* But if you honestly think the sea's such a rotten life, why don't you get out of it?

BURKE: *Surprised.* Work on land, is it? *She nods. He spits scornfully.* Digging spuds in the muck from dawn to dark, I suppose? *Vehemently.* I wasn't made for it, Miss.

ANNA: *With a laugh.* I thought you'd say that.

BURKE: *Argumentatively.* But there's good jobs and bad jobs at sea, like there'd be on land. I'm thinking if it's in the stokehole of a proper liner I was, I'd be able to have a little house and be home to it wan week out of four. And I'm thinking that maybe then I'd have the luck to find a fine dacent girl--the like of yourself, now--would be willing to wed with me.

ANNA: *Turning away from him with a short laugh--uneasily.* Why, sure. Why not?

BURKE: *Edging up close to her--exultantly.* Then you think a girl the like of yourself might maybe not mind the past at all but only be seeing the good herself put in me?

ANNA: *In the same tone.* Why, sure.

BURKE: *Passionately.* She'd not be sorry for it, I'd take my oath! 'Tis no more drinking and roving about I'd be doing then, but giving my pay day into her hand and staying at home with her as meek as a lamb each night of the week I'd be in port.

ANNA: *Moved in spite of herself and troubled by this half- concealed proposal--with a forced laugh.* All you got to do is find the girl.

BURKE: I have found her!

ANNA: *Half-frightenedly--trying to laugh it off.* You have? When? I thought you was saying--

BURKE: *Boldly and forcefully.* This night. *Hanging his head-- humbly.* If she'll be having me. *Then raising his eyes to hers-- simply.* 'Tis you I mean.

ANNA: *Is held by his eyes for a moment--then shrinks back from him with a strange, broken laugh.* Say--are you--going crazy? Are you trying to kid me? Proposing--to me!--for Gawd's sake!--on such short acquaintance? *CHRIS comes out of the cabin and stands staring blinkingly astern. When he makes out ANNA in such intimate proximity to this strange sailor, an angry expression comes over his face.*

BURKE: *Following her--with fierce, pleading insistence.* I'm telling you there's the will of God in it that brought me safe through the storm and fog to the wan spot in the world where you was! Think of that now, and isn't it queer--

CHRIS: Anna! *He comes toward them, raging, his fists clenched.* Anna, you gat in cabin, you hear!

ANNA: *All her emotions immediately transformed into resentment at his bullying tone.* Who d'you think you're talking to--a slave?

CHRIS: *Hurt--his voice breaking--pleadingly.* You need gat rest, Anna. You gat sleep. *She does not move. He turns on BURKE furiously.* What you doing here, you sailor fallar? You ain't sick like oders. You gat in fo'c's'tle. Dey give you bunk. *Threateningly.* You hurry, Ay tal you!

ANNA: *Impulsively.* But he is sick. Look at him. He can hardly stand up.

BURKE: *Straightening and throwing out his chest--with a bold laugh.* Is it giving me orders ye are, me

bucko? Let you look out, then! With wan hand, weak as I am, I can break ye in two and fling the pieces over the side--and your crew after you. *Stopping abruptly.* I was forgetting. You're her Old Man and I'd not raise a fist to you for the world. *His knees sag, he wavers and seems about to fall. ANNA utters an exclamation of alarm and hurries to his slde.*

ANNA: *Taking one of his arms over her shoulder.* Come on in the cabin. You can have my bed if there ain't no other place.

BURKE: *With jubilant happiness--as they proceed toward the cabin.* Glory be to God, is it holding my arm about your neck you are! Anna! Anna! Sure it's a sweet name is suited to you.

ANNA: *Guiding him carefully.* Sssh! Sssh!

BURKE: Whisht, is it? Indade, and I'll not. I'll be roaring it out like a fog horn over the sea! You're the girl of the world and we'll be marrying soon and I don't care who knows it!

ANNA: *As she guides him through the cabin door.* Ssshh! Never mind that talk. You go to sleep. *They go out of sight in the cabin. CHRIS, who has been listening to BURKE's last words with open-mouthed amazement stands looking after them helplessly.*

CHRIS: *Turns suddenly and shakes his fist out at the sea--with bitter hatred.* Dat's your dirty trick, damn ole davil, you! *Then in a frenzy of rage.* But, py God, you don't do dat! Not while Ay'm living! No, py God, you don't!

The Curtain Falls

Le note di scena sono tra parentesi *quadre* o *(tonde).*

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